



The Differences Between Oregon's County Jails and State Prisons

Oregon's 36 County Sheriffs are responsible for all aspects of law enforcement, including search and rescue, criminal investigation, court security and operation of county jails. Oregon's Sheriffs manage and operate 31 jail facilities, maintaining responsibility for inmate admissions, rehabilitation programs, work crews, work release centers, home detention and parole and probation services in several counties. While Oregon's state prisons also hold people who have committed criminal acts, they are operated by the Oregon State Department of Corrections, a state agency, and serve a vastly different purpose.

COUNTY JAILS

County jails are short-term facilities that hold all people who are pretrial detainees, lower level sentenced offenders and individuals who have been sanctioned by Parole and Probation. These facilities primarily serve to hold, assist and stabilize people so they can participate in the court process. Often, the individuals who are arrested and processed through the jail are under the influence of illegal substances, alcohol or experiencing a mental health crisis.



In 2017, Oregon jails processed an average of 14,998 people per month.



On average, adults are held in custody for 11 days.



Jail facilities hold pretrial detainees, those sentenced to less than a year in custody and individuals who have been sanctioned by Parole and Probation.



Jails institute short-term programming designed to stabilize individuals who are suffering from substance abuse or mental health conditions, to ensure that they are safe and able to participate in the court process.

STATE PRISONS

Once stabilized in county jails, prisoners who have participated in their trial and been convicted of felony crimes are transported to one of Oregon's 14 state prisons. Due to the nature of the crimes committed by inmates, prison facilities are designed to hold people for a longer-term and offer programming that prevents recidivism.



In 2018, the Oregon Department of Corrections processed an average of 462 people per month.¹



On average, adults are held in custody for 24.5 months.¹



State prisons only house people who have been convicted of a felony offense where the sentence exceeds more than a year, as required by Oregon statute.



Prisons implement long-term programming that serves to rehabilitate inmates with substance abuse and mental health disorders, preventing recidivism.

COUNTY JAIL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

The Oregon State Sheriffs' Association (OSSA) and its members are committed to maintaining the highest level of quality, safety, security and staff professionalism within Oregon's county jail facilities. We are proud that our county jail facilities are fully compliant with Oregon's 14 statutory jails standards requirements. With an interest in continually improving and implementing best practices within our county jails, the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association has independently developed a higher set of voluntary jail standards and practices that are adopted by all Oregon sheriffs. These enhanced standards are not required by law, but reflect the desire of Oregon sheriffs to improve our county jail system.

¹ Oregon Department of Corrections. <https://www.oregon.gov/doc/Documents/agency-quick-facts.pdf>